

REMARKS

The Office Action of September 1, 2011 has been carefully studied. In addition, a telephone conference was conducted with the Examiner on or about September 14, 2011, at which time, it is believed that Counsel has sufficiently understood the rejection so as to modify the claims so as to avoid the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 112, in particular the rejection of claims 1-27 at the bottom of page 9 of the Office Action asserting that there were omitted structural cooperative relationships between steps (a) and (b).

The following paragraphs correspond to the order of the paragraphs of the Office Action:

Election/Restrictions

All claims except claims 28 and 29 have been rejoined and fully examined for patentability. Consequently, claims 28 and 29 are now cancelled so as to provide Applicants with an opportunity of filing a divisional application directed thereto under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. 120 and 121.

As to other prior rejections based on 35 U.S.C. 112 and 35 U.S.C. 103, Applicants appreciate the withdrawal of these rejections as set forth on pages 3-6 of the Office Action.

New Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 112

Claim 1 is substantially amended so as to avoid the minor rejection on page 7 and more importantly the rejection of claims 1-27 in the paragraph bridging pages 9 and 10 of the Office Action.

As for the minor rejection regarding “concentrating” and “concentrated”, the term “concentrating” is a process description and the term “concentrated” is a description of the resultant step of concentrating.

As for the major change in step (a), it is directed to the former dependent claims 2, 3, 6 and 7, with the additional provision that in steps (iii), (iv), the CO₂ absorbed in aqueous phase or in a hydrated form is transferred to a water-insoluble ionic liquid medium, as set forth on page 5,

lines 5-7. Since a water-insoluble ionic medium is necessarily an aprotic medium, it serves as support for the following step where the electro-reduction of the resultant liquid phase is conducted in an aprotic medium.

Claim 9

The expression “the solution obtained” is now changed to --the resultant liquid phase obtained--, the expression “liquid phase” being found in claim 7 upon which claim 9 is indirectly dependent.

Claim 16

The definite article “the” is now changed to the indefinite article --a--.

Claim 17

The expression “an aprotic medium” is now changed to --the aprotic medium-- to avoid any confusion.

Claim 20

The expression “the electro-reduction step (b)” is now corrected to --the extracting step (c)--.

Claim 21

The expression “carbonated” in line 1 is cancelled.

Claim 23

The “electro-reduction step” is now changed to --the extracting step--.

Claim 26

The expression “electro-reduction step (b)” is now changed to --the extraction step (c)--.

Rejection of Claims 1-27 Under 35 U.S.C. 112 Second Paragraph

By virtue of the present amendment to step (a) of claim 1, it is believed that the requisite relationship between steps (a) and step (b) is now sufficiently set forth. More specifically, the liquid phases resulting from step (a) constitute either pressurized CO₂ or CO₂ absorbed in an aprotic medium, and step (b) requires the electro-reduction of the resultant liquid phase containing either liquefied CO₂, absorbed CO₂ in an aprotic medium or CO₂ in a water-insoluble ionic liquid medium.

It is believed that the above corrections should resolve the issues set forth in the Office Action. If not, it would be appreciated if the Examiner would be so kind as to telephone Counsel at the number indicated below before November 23, 2011 or after March 16, 2012. In the interim, in Counsel's absence, please telephone Ms. Richardson at 703-812-5326, and she will be pleased to enlist the services of another attorney. It is hoped that such a telephone call will be unnecessary and that the application is now in condition for allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3402.

Respectfully submitted,

/I. William Millen/

I. William Millen, Reg. No. 19,544
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)

MILLEN, WHITE, ZELANO
& BRANIGAN, P.C.
Arlington Courthouse Plaza 1, Suite 1400
2200 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22201
Telephone: (703) 243-6333
Facsimile: (703) 243-6410

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IWM:pdr